The overall exemptions for this document are (b)(1) and (b)(3).

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: SEP 2000

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EUROPEAN BRIEF CI EB 76-064.Y

1. PORTUGAL: PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL PARTIES, CONCERNED THAT TWO YEARS OF NON-STOP POLITICAL ACTIVITY MAY HAVE TURNED OFF LARGE NUMBERS OF VOTERS, ARE ENGAGED IN AN ELEVENTH-HOUR EFFORT TO OVERCOME VOTER APATHY BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTION ON SUNDAY. THE RULING REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL HAS ALSO ISSUED AN APPEAL FOR A STRONG VOTER TURNOUT. Y

PARTIES OF BOTH THE LEFT AND RIGHT—WHICH END THEIR CAMPAIGNS THIS EVENING—AS WELL AS MANY POLITICAL OBSERVERS IN LISBON, BELIEVE THAT ABSTENTIONS WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR, WHEN 91.7 PERCENT OF REGISTERED VOTERS PARTICIPATED IN THE HIGHLY CHARGED CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. Y

THE CENTRIST POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE CENTER-RIGHT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER ARE WORRIED THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO ABSTAIN WILL BE CONSERVATIVES WHO ARE FED UP WITH PORTUGAL'S "REVOLUTION OF THE CARNATIONS." Y

COMMUNIST CONCERN THAT SOME OF THE PARTY'S MODERATE LEFT-WING SUPPORTERS MIGHT BE AMONG THE NO-SHOWS WAS INDICATED IN RECENT

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REMARKS BY PARTY LEADER ALVARO CUNHAL, WHO HAS BEEN EMPHASIZING THAT "NO GOOD DEMOCRAT SHOULD ABSTAIN." Y

FACED WITH THE PROSPECT OF HIS PARTY BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO BE FORMED THIS SUMMER, CUNHAL CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR A COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST COALITION. CUNHAL ON WEDNESDAY THREATENED TO WITHHOLD COMMUNIST SUPPORT FROM THE SOCIALISTS IN PARLIAMENT IF THEY ATTEMPT TO FORM A MINORITY GOVERNMENT ON THEIR OWN. Y

THE SOCIALISTS, WHO HAVE STEADFASTLY REBUFFED OVERTURES BY THE COMMUNISTS, IGNORED THE LATEST COMMUNIST THREAT, SAYING THAT ANY ALLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE A BETRAYAL OF THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE. THE SOCIALISTS HAVE ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT A CAMPAIGN STICKER CLEVERLY CONTRIVED BY THE COMMUNISTS THAT SHOWS A WORKER'S CLENCHED FIST, THE SOCIALISTS' EMBLEM, HOLDING THE COMMUNIST HAMMER AND SICKLE AND FEATURING AN APPEAL FOR UNITY BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES. Y

MEANWHILE, SEVERAL MILITARY CANDIDATES ARE ALREADY JOCKEYING FOR POSITION IN THE IMPORTANT FOLLOW-UP PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION,

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WHICH WILL BE HELD IN TWO MONTHS. PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO RECENTLY REAFFIRMED HIS INTENTION TO BE A CANDIDATE AND ISSUED A THINLY DISGUISED APPEAL TO THE PARTIES FOR THEIR SUPPORT. Y

THE APPARENT FRONT-RUNNER, NORTHERN MILITARY REGION COMMANDER PIRES VELOSO, IS PLANNING AN ELECTION GAMBIT OF HIS OWN—A TRIP TO THE US EARLY NEXT MONTH TO MEET WITH CONGRESSMEN AND LEADERS OF THE PORTUGUESE IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY. LABOR MINISTER TOMAS ROSA, A MEMBER OF THE POWERFUL "OPERATIONAL" WING OF THE MILITARY, CLAIMED ON TUESDAY THAT THE MILITARY IS BEGINNING TO COALESCE AROUND PIRES VELOSO'S CANDIDACY. HE ALREADY ENJOYS SOME SUPPORT IN ALL THREE OF THE MAJOR NON-COMMUNIST PARTIES. Y

LISBON RADIO ANNOUNCED ON THURSDAY THAT A FAR LEFT SPLINTER PARTY HAS ENDORSED FORMER SECURITY CHIEF OTELO DE CARVALHO FOR PRESIDENT. CARVALHO HAS BECOME A POLITICAL "UNPERSON" FOLLOWING HIS IMPLICATION IN THE ABORTIVE NOVEMBER REBELLION, AND HIS CANDIDACY IS NOT LIKELY TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. [redacted]

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